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THE BOLSHEVISATION OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF SPAIN

THE mass movement in Spain is developing with great rapidity. Over the heads of the Socialist and Anarcho-Syndicalist leaders, indifferent to the posturing and babble of the Constituent Assembly, thousands upon thousands of workers and poor peasants are fighting against capitalist and feudal exploitation.

The first stage of the revolution, the overthrow of the monarchy and the transference of power into the hands of the bourgeoisie, is concluded. But the gentlemen of the Republican-Socialist coalition, the Lerroux, Zamolas and Caballeros, are continuing the reactionary, anti-Labour policy of the Bourbon monarchy. The counter-revolution has no need to rally its forces—the Republic is doing that work for them. The Joubaux and MacDonalds of Spain need give no assurance that they will protect the Republic of the capitalists and landowners—they betrayed the workers under the monarchy and dictatorship; how much more will they do so now, when they have to protect their own bourgeois interests against the assaults of the working class! The Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union organisations were declared illegal; freedom of the press, of assembly, of demonstration has been abolished, as well as the right to strike; jointly with the Republicans and the representatives of the old régime, the Socialists are organising a reign of terror against the working class. The workers of Spain have entered upon the fight; they have broken through the dam which held them in check for almost ten years; a wave of strikes is flooding the land and trade unions are growing as rapidly as mushrooms; thousands of workers are organising, millions are waking to political life. For the most part the strikes break out spontaneously; seldom are the struggles prepared beforehand, led and extended in an organised fashion.

The Anarchists and Anarcho-Syndicalists conduct strikes wherever the pressure of the masses compels them to adopt such a course, but they do not centralise the movement which has the whole country in its grip, they issue no common political-revolutionary slogans, they set the movement no common revolutionary aim. Despite their outcry against the Government, they are opposed to giving the strikes a political character, to organise mass action against police terrorism; they sabotage the red trade unions and carry on campaigns against the Communist Party.

The further development of the Spanish Revolution depends upon whether the spontaneously developing mass movement and the beginning of

an insurrectionary movement among the agricultural workers and peasants will proceed along the channels of consciously organised, revolutionary mass action, giving the struggles which flare up here and there a centralised leadership and a common economic and political programme of revolution. Only mass action organised on a national scale will be able to break through the limits of bourgeois legality, sweep aside the counter-revolutionary police regulations and defeat the Civil Guard and the Fascist and Republican Guard established by the Republic. Only by mass action can the armed power of the proletariat be organised, the revolutionary organs of the working class—workers', peasants' and soldiers' Council—be established, creating a power based, "not on law, but on the direct power of the armed masses of the people." (Lenin.)

If, however, this task is to be fulfilled, the proletariat needs a Communist Party, a Bolshevik mass Party firmly rooted in the factories and connected with the trade unions, a Party whose pulse beats with the pulse of the masses, which prepares and organises the struggles of the masses, a Party which leads the masses. Without such a Party the Spanish workers and peasants cannot carry on their revolution to a victorious conclusion. Without such a Party the revolutionary movement will fall a prey to the executioners of the bourgeois Republic.

Our brother Party in Spain, which has been for years carrying on a heroic struggle for existence, is not yet a Bolshevik mass Party. To become such a Party is its most immediate and urgent task. Upon its policy, upon its tactics, upon its revolutionary action, depends the fate of the revolution.

To arrive at a correct revolutionary (i.e., Leninist) policy, the objective situation must first be correctly analysed. The policy of the Spanish Party before and immediately after the events of 14th April reflected an incorrect and superficial understanding of the mutual relations of classes before the downfall of the monarchy. The Party which, during the period of the dictatorship, was isolated from the masses and failed to regard the agrarian question as the basic lever of revolutionary development, being entirely separated from the peasantry, entertained a false and unreal idea of the development of revolutionary forces within the old society. The Party's isolation from the masses, its misunderstanding of the rôle of the Party in the development of the bourgeois democratic revolution, enabled petty-bourgeois Repub-

lican elements, such as Franco's group, to influence the Party and its policy, to weaken its independent class policy and its initiative and mislead it into playing with ideas of an insurrection of an armed minority, instead of the Party carrying on a revolutionary class policy. Thus the events of 14th April took the Party completely by surprise, and it saw in the overthrow of the monarchy merely a change in the outward form of Government and not the contradictions and class struggles which determined the change in the regime. At first the Party denied that the democratic revolution had begun; it was unable to find the correct slogans adapted to the situation and, instead of leading the masses, trotted lamely behind. Even on May 10th, when students, workers and radical petty-bourgeois in Madrid set fire to churches and monasteries, the Party did not understand how to direct this spontaneous mass action, this released hatred, against the police forces of the Republic and particularly against the Civil Guard, detested by all sections of the working population. Instead of immediately calling upon the working demonstrating in the streets to demand the disarming of the Civil Guard, the Party was content with taking a decision that the national agitation campaign fixed for 15th July should be specially directed against the Civil Guard and other police forces. But by 15th July the wave of anti-clerical mass action had already ebbed, and the Party campaign aroused no response.

This incorrect analysis of the situation, coupled with an under-estimation of the remnants of feudalism still remaining in the country, meant that the Party put forward incorrect slogans with regard to the agrarian question, slogans which, considering the development of revolutionary events, were of an opportunist character. The old formula: "The land to those who work it" was repeated, but the agricultural labourers and poor peasants were not urged to take possession immediately of manorial, ecclesiastical and crown lands. The Party did not understand that the time had come to push the democratic revolution forward, and that in order to do this, it was necessary to develop the agrarian revolution. This confused attitude and the Party's generally, purely propagandist formulation of the question, objectively encouraged the hopes and illusions of the peasants in the agrarian reforms promised by the bourgeoisie.

To give centralised direction and a common goal to the action of the masses, to point out the correct road forward, the Party should, on the very day of the downfall of the monarchy, have demanded the formation of workers', peasants' and soldiers' Councils of Soviets. It should at

once have been made clear to the masses that only Soviets, as the organs of power of the revolutionary proletariat, would be able to carry out the democratic demands of the workers and peasants, that only such Councils, supported by the armed people, could really be a defence against the plots of the overthrown monarchists and priests and against the counter-revolutionary policy which the new Government immediately began to conduct. At first the Party did not issue the slogan of Soviets at all; later this slogan was given out, but only in a hesitating and inadequate manner, merely as an agitation slogan. Without Soviets, without revolutionary Councils, without red trade unions and a Communist Party for leader, the masses entered the fight, unprepared and unorganised, looking towards a revolutionary goal, but standing politically and ideologically under the influence of Republicans, Socialists and petty bourgeois Anarchists. This was reflected in the election results of 28th June.

On 12th April the workers as a whole gave their vote against the monarchy and for the Republic, but on 28th June they voted for a Republic of the left, for the left Republicans, the left Autonomists and Socialists. In almost all the constituencies where the Socialists put up independent candidates, they obtained a majority, even in districts where no Socialist Party organisation or reformist trade union centre existed. Socialist leaders spoke frankly of the danger of receiving too many votes and too many seats, which might mean assuming responsibility for Governmental policy; they won 114 seats. At their Congress held shortly after the elections the majority voted against participation in the Government, "unless it were demanded in the interests of the Republic." The elections of 28th June show how widespread are democratic and socialist illusions and hopes among the masses.

The Communist Party received 70,000 votes, which was a considerable advance on 5,000 votes obtained on 12th April, but, considering the revolutionary development and the growth of the strike movement, a sign that the Party was still far from being the leader of the masses. The votes recorded for the Party at Bilbao and Seville do not reflect the real influence of the Party, while in Barcelona we suffered a grave defeat.

Barcelona is not only the greatest industrial centre, it has also the largest population of any town in Spain. It is the proletarian metropolis of the country, the city of revolutionary tradition, the citadel of the C.N.T., the national trade union federation led by Anarchists. The defeat in Barcelona is a defeat for the entire Party. The Party, and the leadership particularly, must learn the lessons of this defeat, must realise that it is

high time to make a definite change to steer another course. The entire policy and the methods of work have to be Bolshevised.

The most important question, without whose solution any real progress is impossible, is that of immediately transforming Party organisation and Party work on to a factory basis. Without any further delay, the Party has to concentrate its energies upon winning the most important factories in the industrial centres. Our best forces in Spain, our most capable organisers and most active propagandists, should be sent to Bilbao, Barcelona, Saragossa, Seville and the mining districts of the Asturias. Without strong Communist bases in the engineering, textile and chemical concerns of Barcelona, the foundries and shipyards of Bilbao, the chemical factories of Saragossa and the coal mines of the Asturias, real mass action under Party leadership cannot even be thought of. To accelerate this process, factory papers must be issued for the largest factories, even if not a single Communist is employed there.

Members of Party locals should be distributed among the factories where work is to be carried on and should at all costs establish contact with the workers employed there, collect material for the first number of the factory paper, carry on recruiting work and continue until the Party is firmly established in the factory. Comrades who refuse to carry on factory concentration work must be excluded from the Party. It is only by putting the Party on a factory basis—and the work must be taken in hand at once by the central and local Party leadership with the utmost energy and determination—that the Party can overcome its present isolation from the masses and the passivity of many of its organisations, and bring new revolutionary forces into its ranks.

Together with the partial economic and political demands, and the main slogans of the Party, Communists in the factories have to carry on propaganda for establishing revolutionary factory committees and organise their election. In opposition to the Anarchists and reformists, who regard factory committees and workers' councils (non-existent up to the present) as bodies for mediating between the working class and the employers and for "reconciling" their interests, the Party must carry on propaganda in favour of revolutionary factory committees as the organs of the irreconcilable class struggle of the proletariat. Agitation on behalf of factory committees has to be connected with the struggle for immediate demands and with all the general economic and political questions which arise in the further development of the revolution. In this agitation for factory committees, the Party must not on

any account weaken its agitation for the organisation of Soviets. On the contrary, the existence of factory committees should facilitate the establishment of Soviets. Factory elections should proceed by means of specially convened factory meetings of all organised and unorganised workers, irrespective of trade union membership, and Party members must see that the most revolutionary and reliable workers are put forward as candidates, so that the manoeuvring and wangles of the anarchists and reformist trade union leaders can be countered from the outset.

We do not wish to repeat all the economic and political demands, partial and final, that should be put forward by the Party, the red trade unions and revolutionary trade union opposition—they have been dealt with in detail in former numbers of this journal. The thing to do now is to put them into operation.

The speed with which revolutionary development has proceeded in some provinces, the acuteness of the strike movement, leading to collisions with the police practically every day, taken in conjunction with the sectarian and *putschist* tendencies still to be found within the Party, may mislead many comrades into despising and underestimating day to day work in the factory and the struggle for the immediate demands of the working class and the poor peasantry. The idea of an immediate armed insurrection will again find adherents; the danger of repeating old mistakes exists and the Party must fight against it to the utmost. The result of the elections and the fact that the greatest number of strikes are not conducted under Communist leadership, but either break out spontaneously or are controlled by the Anarchists and Anarcho-Syndicalists, shows that the Party is not supported by the majority of the working class, nor does it possess sufficient forces to make the question of the seizure of power one of immediate urgency. Before the Party can prepare for an armed insurrection, it has to win the decisive sections of the working class, the workers in the most important industries and factories. Otherwise insurrection is merely a game with the lives of the workers. Before the Communist Party begins an insurrection, it must do everything in its power to ensure victory, and for that very reason it is necessary to devote the best forces in the Party to factory work; for without the support of the most important factories, the Party cannot organise a successful insurrection.

This transformation of the Party on to a factory basis is also essential for successful trade union work. Up to the present the Party's trade union policy has not been crowned with any marked success. The neglect of illegal trade union work

during the period of the dictatorship, the underestimation of the ideological and organisational influence of the Anarchists and the utter inadequacy of the work carried on inside the Anarchist and reformist trade unions, practically isolated the Party from the masses influenced by those bodies. Actually there are no communist trade union fractions to-day working regularly, operating the Party's policy within the unions. This neglect of trade union work delayed the formation of the reconstruction committee of the C.N.T. and then, instead of concentrating on Barcelona, the Anarchist centre and the most important industrial towns in Spain, the Party limited its activities to an attempt to win over the Seville organisations of the C.N.T. As late as the end of 1930, when it was quite clear that the Anarchists were regaining their former influence, and the mass themselves were rebuilding their local trade union organisations under Anarchist and Anarcho-Syndicalist leadership, leading Party comrades were still talking of the "disintegration of the C.N.T." and the "decline in anarchist influence."

The Party was unaware of the development of the mass movement, which forced the C.N.T. leaders to take up the immediate economic demands of the working class and to conduct a struggle for their realisation. Consequently the Party did not realise that work in connection with the reconstruction committee had to proceed along different lines. Instead of immediately issuing the slogan of national revolutionary trade union unity, and making the reconstruction committee the rallying centre, instead of changing its name, which objective development had made more obsolete and which could now only create confusion, instead of making the committee the basis for convening a national Workers' Congress, the Party, as though nothing had happened, stuck to the old line of reconstructing the C.N.T., already reconstructed by the C.N.T. itself.

In Bilbao, centre of the Spanish metallurgical industry, where the Metal Workers' Union, with a membership of more than 5,000, is controlled by the reformists, our comrades established an independent union, counting 200, and affiliated to the reconstruction committee. The necessity of strengthening this weak union, the majority of whose members were recruited from small works, developed an ultra-left tendency in regard to work within the reformist and other unions.

A clear policy and swift action are essential in the trade union question now. The central slogan of our trade union policy is the slogan of the revolutionary trade union unity of the masses in their struggle for immediate demands, in the struggle for the right to strike for freedom of organisation, against the governmental police

terror, for the further development of the revolution and the establishment of a Workers' and Peasants' Government. The revolutionary united front must be established inside and outside the factories, quite irrespective of trade union adherence. The Party must utilise every strike, every struggle, every demand, every conflict, between the strikers and police, to establish revolutionary unity from below.

Further, the Party must make clear, both to itself and to the workers, the question of revolutionary trade union opposition, in all its political and organisational aspects, and must energetically set to work to build up trade union opposition groups. Just now, when reformist treachery and Anarchist double-dealing is becoming clearer to the masses, a powerful revolutionary trade union opposition movement must be created if we are later to win the masses, disappointed in the reformist and Anarchist leaders.

The formation of a revolutionary opposition and, where the relation of forces permits and the majority of the workers are with us, the establishment of red trade unions affiliated to the R.I.L.U. must take their starting point in the factory. Unless revolutionary factory groups are set up, unless we win the factory workers organised in the Anarcho-Syndicalist and reformist unions, it will be impossible for the Party—(Communists are already being excluded from the Anarchist union)—to penetrate the unions that are hostile to us. At the present time, when the Party and the revolutionary unions are again faced with the danger of being driven underground, the question of trade union work inside the factories is a life and death question for the revolutionary labour movement.

In the "Mundo Obrero," the central organ of the Party, there appeared on page three of the issue for 18th July an article headed "Bad Tactics," on the telephone workers' strike at Madrid. The article—an unsigned editorial—correctly criticises the strike tactics pursued by the Anarchists, and the conclusion briefly indicates the tactics that should have been pursued. But nothing else. No word of encouragement for the heroic workers; nothing about Party or trade union opposition activity in aid of the strikers. No word to workers in other factories and industries to support the struggle of the telephone workers. At a moment when the entire attention of the country was directed to the development of that strike, where armed collisions with the police took place daily as a result of the strike, when the workers destroyed telegraph poles, cut cables and blew up telegraph stations, the central organ of the Communist Party finds nothing to say to the workers fighting under Anarchist leadership

except some words of criticism on the conduct of the strike.

These are also "bad tactics" and can win no workers, Anarchist, reformist or any sort. The tactics of revolutionary unity are useful only when they are operated in our daily activity in the struggle. We say again to our Spanish comrades: go into the factories and mobilise all your forces to help the strikers, call upon the workers in other factories to display their solidarity, and however violently the Anarchists and Fascists may attack you, do not be turned aside, but show the workers in your actions, and not only in articles, how Communists prepare, organise and successfully carry through a fight.

The latest reports from Spain show that we are approaching a period in which the Party and the revolutionary unions will be subjected to severe persecution. The Republic is not strongly established; the assault of the workers and peasants threatens to bring down the house of cards created by the new régime. The position of the workers is getting worse from day to day. The constitution will satisfy neither the unemployed of Catalonia nor the starving agricultural labourers and peasants of Andalusia, and the fine speeches of the Socialist Minister of Finance, Prieto, will not make the peseta rise nor the price of food fall.

And the Communist Party does exist, despite all its mistakes and weaknesses. It is growing daily, seeking the right road and showing the masses that it is the only consistent revolutionary party of the proletariat.

The greatest danger now is that the Party may retreat, under the blows of the reaction, to the position and methods of the first illegal period, that it may lose contact with the masses, that it will retrace the path back towards being a sect, instead of forward to becoming a mass party. That is why it is absolutely essential to get the Party on to a factory basis, for this affords an opportunity of fighting successfully against illegality. With Party locals in hiding, the press shut down, meetings and demonstrations forbidden, the masses can only be mobilised in and through the factory.

The Party must immediately take up the fight against the attempt to drive it into illegality. "Flying meetings" must be organised at the factories themselves or at the gates before and after work, in the streets and the workers' districts. Party speakers should be sent to all the meetings of trade unions and other workers' organisations, of socialists and left Republicans—if workers are present—should demand the right to speak and should try to get carried resolutions of protest against the suppression of the Party, the press and the right of assembly, against police terrorism, etc. If Party papers are suppressed by

law, illegal sheets must at once be issued and distributed in the factories, and working-class districts, and collections should be taken for their financial support. The Party's example must show the masses that bourgeois laws can be broken and that the organised revolutionary action of the masses is able to overcome police regulations.

The danger of a new period of complete or partial illegality imposes upon the Party the task of immediately extending its ranks. The ideological and organisational weakness of the Party, its almost complete disappearance during the régime of Primo de Rivera, can be explained partly by the lack of leaders in the lower and middle Party organisations. It is the immediate duty of all the leading Party bodies, beginning with the Central Committee and right down to every cell leader, to strengthen our ranks by drawing in the best and most tried workers from the factories for consultation and practical work; then, despite persecution and arrests, the work of the comrades excluded from the struggle can be carried on. A certain conservatism which exists concerning the question of drawing new elements on to Party committees, and which reflects the sectarian tendencies still present within the Party, must be fought against and wiped out. The Spanish bourgeoisie shall not succeed a second time in destroying the Spanish Communist Party.

The terrorist action of the Republican Socialist Government is both the strength and the weakness of the new bourgeoisie régime of Spain. The very fact that the Republic, but four months old, can maintain its supremacy against the onslaught of the workers only with the help of the truncheon and the machine gun, will itself destroy democratic illusions and accelerate the development of revolutionary sentiments among the masses. The Party now has to exert all its strength to catch up with the development of the revolutionary mass movement. At the forthcoming Congress it must frankly admit its mistakes and, resolute and determined, conscious of the great responsibility which rests upon it, take the road towards becoming a real Bolshevik Party.

After the Seville events, which to a certain extent marked a turning point in the activities of the Party, an improvement was observed.

There are symptoms which indicate that the Party is beginning to realise the mistakes it has committed and to rectify them in deeds and not merely in words. In particular the Party is taking practical measures to close the gap between itself and the masses. It is taking an increasingly active part in the struggles, and applying the tactics of the united front, especially with those workers who are fighting under the leadership of the Anarcho-Syndicalists.

THE CHIEF TASK OF THE MOMENT

Situation in Germany and the Tasks of the Communist Party in Germany*

As time passes the world economic crisis grows ever more acute and deep-seated, affecting one branch of national economy after the other, first industry then finance; disorganising radically the State budgets and credit systems of the capitalist countries.

As time passes, the resistance of monopolist capital to the corroding influence of the crisis becomes weaker; "unexpected" crashes in important sections of the capitalist system become more and more dramatic. The more intense and "organised" the efforts of the world bourgeoisie to seek a capitalist outcome of the crisis, the sharper become all the internal and external contradictions of capitalism.

The dialectic unity of the contradictions in the capitalist world are to be seen most clearly in the German situation. Three months ago the XI. Plenum of the E.C.C.I. established the fact that the economic crisis would "lead to an extraordinary sharpening of class struggles and to augmented political upheavals, which would hasten the advent of all factors necessary for a revolutionary crisis."

Since the XI. Plenum, the process of the decline of capitalist economy in Germany has gone forward at a more rapid rate. Germany is entering a new phase of the crisis. The further details in German capitalism has brought out all the contradictions within the capitalist world, together with the revolutionary activity of the toiling masses of town and village against the Government and its policy of Fascist dictatorship.

In June a wave of hunger riots among the unemployed swept through the land. An enormous quantity of capital was being exported from Germany. President Hindenberg cabled an S.O.S. to the gold-kings of the "promised land" of capitalism, while signing decrees further to rob the unemployed workers and to impose new taxes upon the working population. In July occurred the insolvency of the Danatbank—"Black Monday"; hundreds of thousands of terrified depositors flocked around the closed banks and savings banks. German ministers rushed by aeroplane from London to Paris, from Paris to Berlin. Disorder and panic reigned in the camp of the bourgeoisie, from Hitler the Fascist to Wels the Social Democrat. "The future must hold either improvement or chaos"—this was the distress signal of the German bourgeoisie.

"Either means must immediately be discovered for a capitalist way out of the crisis—or the Proletarian Revolution is inevitable."

Sixty years ago, Bismarck, the father of German Imperialism, greeted by excited, patriotic crowds after routing the French at Sedan, exclaimed from his balcony: "You hear the thunder; the heavens salute our German victories!" The crash of failing banks, the sound of breaking glass in the great department stores, the savage cries of crowds maddened by the panic on the Exchange—all these "salute" the disastrous economic and financial defeats of the most advanced capitalism of the Continent—that of Germany—writhing under the whip of French imperialism, in the grip of the Versailles "Peace."

Thirteen years ago, after the October Revolution, Lenin wrote: "If Socialism is not victorious, then peace among the capitalist States will mean merely a *truce, a break, preparations for a new war among peoples*. Peace and bread—these are the basic demands of the workers and exploited" (Lenin: "For Bread and Peace").

Socialism has up to now been victorious in one country alone. But the historic end of this "break" is due. After the short period of so-called stabilisation, after the golden era promised to the working class by German Social Democracy as a result of capitalist rationalisation, after Locarno and the "pacifist" blackmail of the Second International, the world economic crisis and the steadily growing prerequisites for a revolutionary crisis in Germany have made a thousand times more acute all the contradictions inherent in the Versailles system.

Never before has the advantage of that world which is building Socialism over the world of decaying capitalism been so great and so apparent to millions of the working masses. Never before have the problems of the Soviet Union and of the Versailles system stood out, simultaneously, in so conspicuous a form as now they do before the capitalist world. Germany is the highway of Proletarian Revolution in Europe. The preservation of the Versailles system is for Germany one of the biggest hindrances in the way of a capitalist solution of the crisis. But at the same time the preservation of the Versailles system is one of the most important weapons of struggle against Proletarian Revolution in Germany, the revolution which this same Versailles system unhaltingly urges ahead. It is precisely this that explains

*This article was written on August 7, 1931, i.e., before the Referendum was held.

the position taken up by German Social Democracy in favour of French imperialism; it is just this that explains the fact that the contradictions inside the camp of the French-German Social-imperialists have been made to occupy a secondary position.

In view of the above, the Communist vanguard is possessed of considerable responsibility in fulfilling its historic task of exactly defining the chief problem of the moment, in presenting an "exact estimate, on the basis of objective facts, of the relationship between the classes and the concrete peculiarities of each historic moment" (Lenin). What objectively established facts should guide the party of the revolutionary proletariat of Germany at the present moment, in defining the tasks before the workers and the methods to be put into action?

First of all, what is the international and internal situation of German capitalism?

The distinctive feature of the present phase of the economic crisis in Germany consists in the slow development of the industrial crisis into a financial one. The so-called "confidence crisis" did not begin to-day. In September and October last year, after the Parliamentary elections, the export of capital abroad immediately rose to milliards of marks. The reproduction of this outward flow of capital, and its transfer to a higher stage of development of the economic crisis, together with the factors necessary for a revolutionary crisis, should inevitably signify an enormous financial and economic upheaval. This second wave of crisis, in connection with the export of capital abroad, began after Germany's defeat at Geneva, after the breakdown of the Austro-German Draft Customs Union, when the German bourgeoisie endeavoured to make use of the contradictions inside the camp of the imperialist-victors, to break through the Versailles Peace, to gain an outlet on the Danube and an independent imperialist policy in the Near East. And while the flow of capital abroad was, *at first*, carried on by the German bourgeoisie itself, who patriotically exported $1\frac{1}{2}$ milliard marks abroad to be "on the safe side," in the present period the blow has been delivered directly by the gendarmes of the Versailles system—by French imperialism with the energetic "assistance" of the German capital investors *themselves*.

The legend of the "isolation" of French imperialism rapidly vanished into thin air. The manoeuvring of French imperialism consisted in firstly bringing Germany to its knees, and then destroying the imperialist tendencies of German bourgeoisie; in reducing capitalist Germany to the position of a rank-and-file vassal of French

Imperialism and including her in the united anti-Soviet front.

French imperialism owns the largest gold reserves after the United States. Out of 51.4 milliard marks which forms the world reserve of gold in 1931, the United States is responsible for 20.6 milliard marks and France, 9.3 milliard marks. The French Central Bank has also at its disposal six and one-third milliards in foreign currency. Within a very short period French imperialism has found it possible to pump out of Germany over two milliard marks, chiefly in the form of short-term loans, the total indebtedness of Germany being 18 milliard (including short-term credits to the amount of 8.2 milliard). To estimate the situation it is sufficient to indicate that, of the remaining 4 milliard approximately short-term credits in the second half of July, $1\frac{1}{2}$ milliard can be attributed to the U.S.A., $1\frac{1}{2}$ milliard to England and only 400 million to France. This blow was timed correctly. The shock which affected the position of the State Bank brought directly in its train the resulting bank crashes. In Germany a state of seige was declared in the sphere of finance. The efforts of the united front of German monopolist capital, the mutual assurance given by thousands of the largest German industrial and banking enterprises to support the credit system were a mere flash in the pan. The rate at which short-term credits flowed out did not even slacken but even increased. The bank rate, which had been preserved hitherto by monopolist capital in contradiction to all the laws of "normal" crises, and had given the advocates of "organised capitalism" the opportunity of clinging to their outworn theories, now began to rise—at first to 5% and then to 7%. The financial front of monopolist capital which had resisted so firmly up till now, was at last broken. It was then that Hindenburg made his overture to Hoover, and Brüning and Curtius journeyed to Chequers.

What were the true motives of Hoover's "pacifist" gesture?

They amount, in the main, to the following: (a) America herself is desirous of safeguarding the capital she has invested in Germany, fearing an excessive development of the crisis; it was, therefore, a plan to save capitalist Germany from Proletarian Revolution; (b) America wanted to bring Germany into the united anti-Soviet front "in her own manner"; (c) America wanted to safeguard the Young plan "in her own way"; (d) America wanted to make use of the situation to augment her export; (e) Hoover was making "ideological" preparations for the presidential elections which are to take place in the near future.

In connection with the Hoover plan, the legend of the "isolation" of French imperialism was again dispersed. Not only did the bourgeois politicians and leaders of the Second International begin to talk about the start of a new era of capitalist stabilisation, but even in individual sections of the Communist party, as Comrade Thälmann explained to us at the last Plenum of the Central Committee of the German Communist Party, voices were heard referring to the "pacifist actions" of American capitalism, "peremptorily dictating" her terms concerning a moratorium to Europe and, in particular, to French imperialism. It appeared to them that a re-grouping of the capitalist forces was taking place. French imperialism had turned out to be incapable of organising intervention against the Soviet Union, particularly in view of her isolation. The old plan of intervention has thus fallen through. The leading rôle in the organisation of the anti-Soviet front is passing from French to American imperialism. "America is seizing the political initiative from Europe." As a result of this re-grouping of forces, the danger of military intervention has passed for the moment.

Thus we find that the question of France's isolation is *far from academic*. The theory of the isolation of French imperialism in actual fact inevitably leads to a *weakening* of the struggle against the Versailles system, since capitalist France is the chief advocate of this system, and to an *under-estimation* of the danger of military intervention against the U.S.S.R., preparations for which are now taking place on a *higher* level.

It was not because of her isolation that French imperialism could not organise military intervention against the U.S.S.R. The consciousness of the growing might of the Proletarian Dictatorship in consequence of the victories of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. forces imperialism to carry out the organisation of the anti-Soviet front to suit the new conditions, which primarily necessitates the enticement into the united anti-Soviet front not only of the Eastern European vassals, but also of the great imperialist powers. This is the crux of the whole policy of the imperialist world in its attitude towards Germany.

The struggle between French, English and American imperialism is raging around the question of *how and in what form* the German financial crisis can be made use of. While French imperialism seeks complete hegemony on the Continent by presenting political demands to bourgeois Germany in return for her "acts of salvation" (her demand that Germany drop the question of Austro-German unity; that she re-

frain from building warships; her effort to establish financial control over Germany, etc.) English and American imperialism, each in its own way, are endeavouring to weaken this hegemony, not wishing that French imperialism alone, economically and politically, should enjoy the fruits of her "acts of salvation" towards capitalist Germany. The following statement in the official organ of the British Labour Government, the *Daily Herald*, of June 18, is characteristic:

"The United States and Great Britain reply to the menacing demands of France. The onslaught upon the pound sterling made during the last few days by French imperialism, by the adoption of her favourite method of extracting short-term credits from England, represents a political manoeuvre for the purpose of bringing pressure to bear on British imperialism with a view to compelling her to make further concessions to the political demands of French imperialism concerning Germany."

As we know, assistance in the form of credits was not granted. Yet even two milliard of immediate credit could only temporarily lighten the situation and not really clear up the confusion caused by the financial crisis. The return of the President of the Reichsbank, Luther, empty-handed from London and Paris, produced a panic. On July 11 the outward flow of foreign currency from the State bank amounted to 100 million marks. The panic flared up in the first place around the Danatbank. On July 13 the banks were paying out 10-15% of the sums demanded. The same evening the banks and savings banks were ordered to close down for two days. The outward flow of capital by the end of July had reached unheard of dimensions — from 7 to 8 milliard marks. The Brüning Government, by forcing exports, was facilitating this export of valuta. Not only the foreign banks, but the German capitalists, despite the patriotic appeals and decrees of the Brüning Government, feverishly exported all that was possible, thus accumulating foreign currency abroad.

The collapse of the Danat bank was not simply a bank crash, but was an event of *enormous political importance*. This bank has the closest connection with all the chief branches of German industry. The Danat bank was especially closely connected with the metallurgical, engineering, potassium and textile industries of Germany. The German steel trust, the Upper Silesian metallurgical works, the famous Krupp Company, the Klewner concern, the North-German Woollen concern (which became insolvent before the Danat bank collapsed) and several other large undertakings in almost all branches of industry in Germany enter the sphere of interest of the Danat bank. Thus the collapse of the Danat bank

clearly revealed the *relationships between the industrial crisis and the financial crisis*. Huge credits, advanced by the banks to German industry, are held up because of industrial stagnation. In itself the result of the industrial crisis, the financial crisis in turn must inevitably lead to a further sharpening of the industrial crisis.

The new attempts at international "salvation" on behalf of capitalist Germany, the so-called Credits Conference of the seven powers in London, broke down as did all previous attempts, and brought about an even greater sharpening of contradictions inside the camp of the imperialist-victors. In London, instead of the credits he anticipated, Brüning was given a declaration in favour of a postponement of the withdrawal of short-term credits from Germany. This, of course, was far from being of any serious assistance to German capitalism. It was not for nothing that the German delegation in London reported with disappointment: "We did not come, after all, for these, but for *new credits*." Besides which, it is still unknown to what extent it will be possible to operate this resolution; it is not so easy to make the bankers and capitalists of the entire world risk their capital in Germany in the circumstances of a developing financial crisis. With regard to the difficulties in connection with operating the London resolution, we have the news of a meeting of American bankers, which took place on July 23 on the initiative of the Federal Reserve Bank. The *Berliner Börsenzeitung*, with regard to this meeting, wrote as follows:

"The banking world is inclined to believe that in the interests of German credits, it would not be wise to talk so much about their being 'frozen,' since in certain circumstances this might cause an unfavourable influence upon the proffering of further credits."

Meanwhile French imperialism inexorably continued its political advance in London, demanding Germany's complete capitulation. The Brüning Government has not yet capitulated; and, even should it desire to, it cannot do so without the risk of an open outburst of indignation inside Germany itself.

As a result of the London conference, it is still more difficult for German industry to obtain credits; the bank rate has risen to 10%; the dollar is worth 12 marks on the illegal exchange; and a new series of bank crises has begun.

The *Frankfurter Zeitung* writes as follows on the results of the London conference under the title, "No More Illusions":

"After all that has passed, there is not the slightest reason for creating further illusions. France does *not wish* to help us until we have accepted her political demands. England *cannot* help us, as can be seen from the increase in the English

bank rate yesterday, from 2½ per cent. to 3½ per cent. America, after postponing war payments for one year, *declines* to take further material risks in Europe."

What are the future prospects of the German bourgeoisie? They have at present two possible sources of new financial means: *foreign credits* or *internal resources*. Without doubt the German bourgeoisie understands that at the present moment the two milliard dollars which is the maximum that can be obtained in foreign credits is a mere drop in the ocean. The only real source of finance can be obtained by robbing—directly or indirectly—the toiling masses, and primarily the German working class. The main offensive upon the standard of living of the toiling masses is being made in two directions; under the slogan of "self-help" the entire bourgeoisie, including the Social Democracy, is carrying on propaganda for *inflation* which, by plundering the broad masses, must produce finance for industry. "It cannot go on like this any longer," declares the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, "the State bank must declare its readiness to satisfy all demands for credits." "It is essential that the free circulation of money be immediately restored by the customary method of printing banknotes under strict control," wrote the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* the following day. "Further delay on the part of the State Bank will only complicate the cure," writes the ex-Social Democratic Minister of Finance of the German bourgeoisie, Rudolph Hilferding, in the last number of the *Gesellschaft* (article entitled "The Only Way").

In actual fact, inflation has already begun. The normal gold and foreign currency limit of the State bank has been reduced from 40 to 30%. During the course of the second week in July alone, the State Bank lost gold and foreign currency to the extent of 302.3 million marks.

Together with the above methods, a *direct cut in wages* is being organised and operated on an unprecedented scale. When we consider that the total wages in Germany amount to about 40 milliard marks, then—even if we take into consideration the loss in wages due to unemployment—the direct cut in wages, according to the definite plan laid down in Brüning's decrees, can bring much greater results than foreign credits. Already on the day following the collapse of the Danat bank, the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*—the organ of heavy industry—announced that: "assistance can be forthcoming only by means of long-term foreign credits and the immediate publication of a Decree permitting a 30% decrease in wages." On July 23, the Court of Arbitration in the North-West metallurgical district fixed a general drop in wages from

August 1. The Employers' Association of Central Germany demanded the abolition of the legislation which "hinders the free settlement of wages."

These are the measures suggested by the German bourgeoisie to ensure a capitalist solution of the crisis. Moreover, the division of labour between monopolist capital and its social mainstay, Social Democracy, is characteristic. Whereas monopolist capital is frank and brutal in its programme for the robbing of the working class, and emphasises to the utmost the necessity of lowering wages, Social Democracy, which actually implements the wage-cuts, publicly focusses attention upon foreign credits and inflation. "Every German worker should see to it now that his employer gets foreign credits" writes Vorwaerts, the social-police organ.

The Government, with its policy of Fascist dictatorship, is endeavouring, by means of pressure from the State apparatus, to ensure the prerequisite conditions for achieving this plan of German capital. The decree concerning "voluntary compulsory labour for the unemployed" is meant to drive the starving masses from off the streets of the industrial centres. The decree on the press is meant to throttle the Communist press. Police raids are made on the Communist Party offices. There is a plot on foot between Social Democracy and monopolist capital, Severing and Brüning, to destroy the revolutionary movement of the workers, to deliberately provoke the German proletariat, to strangle the Communist Party. The Prussian plebiscite took place in circumstances of violent police terror against the Communist Party.

But the more savage the attack becomes of the German bourgeoisie upon the workers' standard of living, the more German Social Democracy prepares to sell the interests of the German people to French imperialism for the purpose of drawing Germany into the united anti-Soviet front, the more extensive and fundamental are the revolutionary activities of the masses against the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

This has found its expression firstly in the growth of the Communist Party itself. During the period between the February Presidium of the E.C.C.I. (1931) and the XI Plenum (April, 1931), the membership of the Communist Party of Germany rose from 125 thousand to 200 odd thousand. During the two months which followed the XI Plenum of the E.C.C.I., the new influx of members amounted to 70 thousand. At the same time, all the German mass revolutionary organisations grow equally fast: the Red Trade Union Opposition, the Y.C.L., the Red Front Fighters, and so on. This is further reflected in the exten-

sive, extremely powerful movement of the unemployed which has swept throughout Germany during the last three months and has been accompanied, in several places, by spontaneous raids upon food shops and warehouses. It was reflected in the new attitude taken up by the workers, especially the revolutionary vanguard, which made itself felt during the demonstrations of the Red Front Fighters against the refusal to give the workers permission to hold their Workers' Spartakiade; and also during the meeting held in the Sports Hall against the Brüning Decrees, where the demonstrators manifested more endurance and courage than ever before, in the face of armed troops and the police. And, finally, it was also apparent in the new spirit among the petty bourgeoisie in town and village.

It was then already possible for the XI E.C.C.I. Plenum to claim that the Communist Party of Germany had been able to check the growth of the influence of Fascism upon the petty bourgeois strata in towns and village. The elections to the factory committees, which took place in the spring of this year, showed that the attempts made by Fascism to penetrate into the factories had ended in complete failure. The development of the crisis in recent months has with surprising rapidity undermined the economic foundation of broad sections of the petty bourgeoisie in town and village, and is to a growing extent undermining *all confidence in the possibility of Germany finding a capitalist way out of the crisis*. The result is that the toiling peasantry with the office workers and other sections of the urban petty bourgeoisie, *are beginning to turn towards the Communist Party*. A proof of this is the famous declaration of the leader of the peasant party (von Salomon) obviously made in consequence of the pressure brought to bear on him by the peasant masses in this party. We have another proof in the successes of the Communist Party among the office workers during the last elections to the factory committees and, what is even more significant, recent events in the Reichswehr (the discovery of a Communist nucleus in the Luxenwald garrison, the appeal of the thirteen officers to the C.P.G.).

In the struggle for influence among the petty bourgeois, which was initiated by the Communist Party against the Fascists during the September elections last year, the scales are turning in favour of the Communist Party.

The path taken by the national movement in Germany against the Versailles system and for bread, freedom and liberty, is clearly the road to Proletarian Revolution. But up to now we have merely the beginning of the process. The con-

tinuation of this process of winning over the petty bourgeoisie to the Proletarian Revolution depends upon the working class itself, on its degree of organisational preparedness, led by the Communist Party, and on the relative forces of the Communist Party and of Social Democracy. It will depend on how far the Communist Party is able to prove to the toiling masses, on the basis of experience, that only the working class, led by the Communist Party and not by the bourgeoisie and Social Democracy, can hold the hegemony in the struggle for national and social liberation. There is at present, therefore, a new and very serious sharpening of the economic crisis and the class contradictions in Germany.

Both the "small" and "big" plans for an imperialist way out of the crisis — by way of foreign credits, inflation and a joint attack of monopolist capital, the State and Social Democracy upon the standard of living of the toilers—will doubtless lead to a much more considerable deepening of the external and internal contradictions of German capitalism, and contradictions inside the camp of the imperialist-conquerors.

The *central question* is: is the analysis of the XI E.C.C.I. Plenum, on the growth of the factors necessary for a revolutionary crisis in Germany, *true to-day*? Is it not perhaps an historical stage that *has passed by*? A correct estimate of *all* the facts that have been proved will allow us to answer this question also.

If the strategic slogan of the national revolution takes on a more concrete form in the daily struggle of the Communist Party in Germany, thanks to the fact that *reserves* of the toiling peasantry and sections of the town petty bourgeoisie are entering the common struggle under the leadership of the proletariat; if the Communist Party itself and its political influence upon the masses is growing in might, if the revolutionary movement of the unemployed is developing on a broader basis, then we have in Germany at present a very considerable *disparity* between the general strategic point of departure of the C.P.G. and the carrying out of the tactical tasks; and especially is this so in connection with the *unemployed workers* movement, on the one hand, and the position of the Communist Party *in the factories* and the movement of the *employed proletarians*, on the other. This has been felt, primarily, in the strike struggles of the working class.

Whereas all round Germany there is a wave of strikes, whereas in Poland—about which, just as about Germany, the XI. Plenum of the E.C.C.I. established the fact that the necessary factors for

a revolutionary crisis were present—the working class in mass strikes (the miners in Dombrow, the textile workers in Byelsk, the tramway workers in Warsaw) has, for the first time during the whole of the economic crisis, gained a victory.

In Germany, where there is deep-rooted revolutionary feeling among the masses, during the whole of last year there was not one victorious mass strike, and the whole strike movement seems to have died down. The German working class, which gives its vote to the Communist Party, which is aroused to indignation by the insolent, provocative policy of Brüning and the German bourgeoisie, is being driven back, without offering any serious resistance to the onslaught of the employers upon wages, and of the State upon the standard of living of the broad masses (encroachments upon social legislation, etc.).

Is it possible then in such circumstances to speak of the presence, now *to-day*, of a revolutionary crisis in Germany? Of course not! "Each revolution means a *sharp turning-point in the lives of the overwhelming masses*. If it is not ripe for such a turning point, *then a real revolution cannot take place*." (Lenin: "Lessons of the Revolution"). The position in Germany to-day is radically different from that of yesterday. There is evident a further serious growth of the prerequisites for a revolutionary crisis. But *to-day* there is as yet *no* revolutionary crisis, although the feature of the present situation in Germany is that the historical moment comes ever nearer. Moreover it should be remembered that the unemployed *alone*, however great may be the significance of the unemployed workers' movement during a world economic crisis, cannot carry through the revolution. *Without the movement of proletarians from the factories there can be no proletarian revolution*.

The key to an understanding of this disparity should be sought for in the following three reasons: in the existing state of the spontaneous movement of the masses as a whole; in the present relation of forces between the Communist Party and Social Democracy and, finally and most important, the fact that the Communists lag behind the activities of the masses in the factories. Although the chief Party cadres lead the working masses in the political sense, they simultaneously lag behind them in the practical sense of operating the correct line of the Party. While endeavouring to make the aim of each given moment of the struggle the national revolution, the active members of the Party not infrequently substitute tactics for the national revolution and as a result lag behind the concrete daily struggle

struggle of the revolutionary Trade Union Opposition inside the reformist trade unions, and isolating themselves from the factories. Social Democracy and the reformist trade unions make use of the strength of their organisation to prevent the indignation of the workers against the onslaught of capital and the Government from developing into open warfare — exploiting the workers' fear of being deprived of his job, urging the working masses along the road of passivity and subjection to the capitalist advance. Because of the weakness of the Party's position in the factories and in the reformist trade unions, this activity of Social Democracy is not sufficiently resisted. And it is here that we find the chief danger to the German revolution. It is sufficient to examine the social composition of the Communist Party of Germany: there is an average of only 20 per cent. who are workers employed in factories. From 60 to 70 per cent. of the members of the Communist Party of Germany are unemployed workers. In certain districts, for instance the Ruhr, only 10 per cent. of the Party membership is engaged in the factories. Owing to the fact that the chief influx of new members into the Party for the last few months has been of unemployed persons, the growth of the Party's strength in the factories lags still further behind the rate of its increase in membership. Meanwhile Social Democracy still has hundreds of thousands of workers in the factories. True, this comparison must not be made from the purely mathematical point of view; the reformist workers frequently go on strike under the leadership of the Communist Party and the revolutionary Trade Union Opposition, against the will of the reformist trade union bureaucracy.

Politically the relative weight of the Communist Party in the factories is *much more*, since in the *large-scale* undertakings and in the *main* branches of industry the relation of forces is more favourable for the Communist Party of Germany. Nevertheless, the fact remains that there are no strikes, because the mass basis of Social Democracy is not yet smashed, because the reformist trade unions are still strong, and our position inside the reformist trade unions, owing to the fact that our work has slackened, has actually become weaker. And this is the case despite the objectively favourable situation which exists, when the workers themselves seek out the Communist Party, as can be seen even from the example of the political strike in Berlin against the dictatorial legislation of Brüning, when almost one-third of the strikers came from factories where there were no Com-

munist nuclei. Sections of workers simply followed the newspaper call of the Communist Party for a mass strike! At the same time the *broad masses* of workers *abstained* from taking part in the strike struggle against the Brüning decrees. Communists in the factories were not able to make use of the great revolutionary unrest of the masses, fettered by legalist Social Democratic traditions, for the purpose of *overcoming their indecision, which was fostered by Social Democracy, and for mobilising the masses in a revolutionary spirit against Social Democracy.* The active members of the Communist Party were not able to mobilise and organise the revolutionary activity of the masses and direct it against the bourgeoisie and Social Democracy; several Party organisations remained passive during the days of bourgeois panic—July 13—16. As a result of this lagging behind on the most important front of the struggle we now have the unhindered operation of the dictatorial decrees of Brüning.

Thus, the question of the work of the Communist Party of Germany *in the factories* and inside the reformist trade unions,—in other words, the question of *winning over the majority* of the working class, is directly linked up *with the correct inter-relationship—in the concrete work* of the Communist Party—between the Party's strategic line of departure and the tactical tasks, the destruction of the mass basis of Social Democracy in the first place—beginning with *overcoming the backwardness of the Communist Party itself as compared with the mood of the masses.* This means that the decision and preparedness of the Communists in the work of smashing up the mass basis of Social Democracy, of destroying the trade union bureaucracy inside the reformist trade unions, must be of a much higher quality than at present. There is at present not the slightest doubt that if French imperialism is now the chief danger to the revolution from the outside, Social Democracy is the chief menace to the German revolution within the land. We must seize German Social Democracy by the throat *before* the proletarian revolution. Here again history confirms the fundamental strategic laws of Leninism:

They consist in the recognition that:

1. The most dangerous social mainstay of the enemies of the revolution in the period of approaching revolution, are the *reformist parties.*

2. It is impossible to overthrow the enemy (Tsarism or the bourgeoisie) without isolating these parties.

3. The chief blows during the period of preparation for revolution must, in view of the

above, be directed towards the isolation of these parties, towards wrenching away from them the broad masses of toilers." (Stalin: "On the Road to October").

The financial crisis revealed with exceeding force the close connection between German Social Democracy and the bourgeois State. As early as the Leipzig conference, the reporter on the economic crisis, Tarnov, declared that the main task of German Social Democracy was to *cure capitalism*. "It goes without saying that *Social Democracy as a whole is working to delay the downfall of capitalism*," wrote a Social Democrat, Heilman, in the Berlin organ of the Social Democratic Party. "Help can come from France alone," declares the German Social Democratic Party quite openly in its manifesto. "The struggle for a Franco-German agreement—i.e., the struggle for work and bread, freedom and peace"—this is how Otto Bauer, the "Left" Austro-Marxist, builds the theoretical foundation for the practical efforts of Social Democracy. The Soviet Union means war; French imperialism means peace; the Socialism of the U.S.S.R. is capitalism, capitalism in Germany is Socialism—these are the new ideological weapons which the Second International uses in the struggle to find a capitalist way out of the crisis.

German Social Democracy is entering the sphere of *crises*. A well-developed crisis in German Social Democracy will mean an advance of the revolutionary crisis in Germany. At the last session of the Plenum of the German General Federation of Trade Unions Tarnov stated:—

"There is a danger that the masses, who are not in a position to realise the situation, will be lost to us."

Already thousands of German workers are leaving the Social Democratic Party. But a still larger number of them, frankly in doubt as to the correctness of the road taken by Wels and Tarnov, still cling to their membership in the party, through the strength of the Social Democratic tradition.

At present some thousands only are coming straight over to the Communist Party. And this predestines the main, tactical line of the German Communist Party at the present stage. The main blows of the German C.P. must be directed towards the isolation of German Social Democracy and primarily towards the isolation of the "Left" Social Democrats. If German Social Democracy is "curing German capitalism, then "Left" Social Democracy is *curing* German Social Democracy. It would be extremely dangerous, *especially* at the present stage, to under-estimate the significance of the "Left" Social Democrats in their rôle as *buffer* between the Communist Party and the Social

Democratic working masses; to fall a victim to the opportunist fantasy about the "double-edged character" of "Left" Social Democratic phrases. The "Left" Social Democrats do not bring revolution nearer, but delay it. And if the weakness of the position of the Communist Party in the factories and inside the reformist trade unions reflects the weakness of the struggle against Social Democracy, then the lesson of Saxony—where the Communists fell victims to the hypnotism of the "double-edged character" of "Left" Social Democratic phrases—most clearly shows exactly *where* it is most difficult to unmask Social Democracy among the broad masses of Social Democratic and reformist workers.

Thus, *the main task* of the moment for the German Communist Party is as follows:—

1. To raise the working-class movement to the level where the German proletariat will indeed attain hegemony of the national revolution. In order to do this the slogans of the party must reach the millions. But the slogans of the Party will become the slogans of the working masses themselves only when "the masses themselves become convinced by their own experience of the correctness of these slogans" (Stalin). Moreover, for the revolution to be victorious, it is essential that the Party, presumably "backed by a spontaneous upsurge, preserve for itself the undivided leadership of the movement Without this distinctive feature of Bolshevik tactics, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in the epoch of Imperialism cannot be victorious" (Stalin). This means that the Communist Party of Germany must in actual fact be capable of organising the defence of the German proletariat against the economic onslaught of capital, fighting not only on a general and mass-strike scale, but organising the struggle of the working class in each factory and workshop against every act of oppression of the employers, mobilising and organising the fighting spirit of each section of the proletariat, both in the factories and in the trade unions. This means that the Communist Party of Germany must to-day tell the German working class clearly and simply what the Communist Party will do when it *comes to power*; how the working class is to *establish* Proletarian Dictatorship; how Soviet power institutes control of industry, nationalisation of the banks, factories and workshops. Propaganda on behalf of the Soviets, as organs of the struggle for power and as organs of that power, must be carried on far more seriously than has been done up to now. The essential of Bolshevik tactics at the present stage is, more insistently than ever before, in the course of the daily work to *link up* the concrete

struggle of to-day with the prospects to be realised to-morrow. This means that the Communist Party of Germany must go beyond the propaganda of independent leadership of the mass struggles of the proletariat, to the *actual operation* of this leadership. The Communist Party of Germany, much earlier and much better than the other sections of the Communist International, began to operate the line of "class against class." But the Communist Party of Germany has accomplished very little independent leadership of the mass struggles of the proletariat. The reasons for this should be sought for primarily in the extraordinary disproportion between the general growth of the Party as its position as compared with Social Democracy in the factories and trade unions.

If the recognition of the special importance of the organisation of unorganised workers in the revolutionary Trade Union Opposition, in the circumstances of the "third period," was necessary for the correct line taken by the V Congress of the R.I.L.U. concerning the creation of an independent revolutionary trade union movement in Germany, then the prerequisite for the realisation of this line is without doubt the mass movement of the workers against the trade union bureaucracy and the liquidation of its mass foundation, by winning over the reformist workers from within the reformist trade unions. The Communist Party cannot and must not reconcile itself to a situation where, even at the district conferences of the revolutionary Trade Union Opposition, the overwhelming majority of delegates are unorganised workers, not more than 25 per cent. of those present at the Conference being trade unionists. It is just this weakness of the Communist Party position in the factories and trade unions which is the *chief source of that acknowledged passivity*, shown by Party organisations, including the Berlin organisation, on July 13th-16th, when the banks were closed and the bourgeoisie panic-stricken.

During those days it would and should have been possible to increase considerably the mobilisation of the working class and thus forward the revolutionary way out of the crisis. This can be done only with the close co-operation of the active members of the Party themselves heading the struggle of the masses; and only when the Communist Party of Germany has gained the advantageous position in the factories and unions.

2. To loose all the forces of the Party in the struggle against Social Democracy. In no country does the development of the revolutionary crisis depend so much upon the rate at which the mass basis of Social Democracy is destroyed as in Germany. This involves the serious concen-

tration by the Communist Party on the Social Democratic workers and to the work of winning the working masses away from the reformist unions. This is no new task. But the moment has now arrived when the Communist Party of Germany must at all costs bring about an immediate and radical change on this front. Even now the open letter of the R.I.L.U., which points out the need for a change in regard to the work inside the reformist trade unions, has not yet reached the lowest units of the Red Trade Union Opposition in the majority of districts. The tactic of a *united front from below* with the Social Democratic and reformist workers is the strongest *weapon for deepening the crisis* in the Social Democracy. It is precisely in this respect that the decision of the Communist Party of Germany, concerning participation in the referendum for the dissolution of the Prussian Landtag, is absolutely and entirely justified. The Prussian Social Democratic Government of Severing is the strongest stronghold of the Brüning Government and its policy of Fascist dictatorship. The participation of the Communist Party of Germany in the referendum is a weapon for the unmasking both of Social Democracy in the form of the Severing Government and of Fascism, which is now sounding the retreat and actually sabotaging the referendum; while the Communist Party is making out of the referendum a broad campaign outside Parliament, and while the dissolution of the Prussian Landtag has become a serious, live menace. The savage howling of the entire Social Fascist camp—from Otto Wels and Kurt Rosenfeld to Heinrich Brandler—have clearly revealed the extent to which the "main blows" fell on the tenderest spot of Social Fascism, shattering the theory of the "lesser evil."

Whether the referendum gives the necessary 13 million votes for the dissolution of the Landtag or no—this is not the most important point in the participation of the Communist Party of Germany. The main thing is the fact that the referendum will make it possible, through experience of a big mass campaign, to estimate more exactly the position of the class forces; it will make it possible to show the German workers, and primarily the Social Democratic workers, the breadth of the *united front* of the bourgeois camp from the *Social Fascists* to the *Fascists*; it will make it possible to mobilise the working masses politically and thus strengthen the penetration of the C.P.G. into the workshops, and to further prepare the German proletariat for determined resistance to the forthcoming plan of attack by capital under the device of "self-help."

3. In carrying out this chief task of the moment, the Communist Party of Germany must

with even greater energy than before wage a relentless war against all manifestations of opportunism in its own ranks, principally opposing the *chief danger of not using the objective situation* and at the same time determinedly *avoiding any attempts to race on ahead*, which would only result in the isolation of the Party from the masses at the decisive moment. For this reason it is primarily necessary that the leadership of the Party operate a *united line of action* and constantly follow the work of the local organisations of the most important industrial centres, *reacting opportunely* to all major political events and at the same time training each Party organisation for *political independence within the framework of the general line of the Party*, especially when spontaneous events occur on the territory of various districts.

Not in word, but in deed must the centre of all Party and trade union work be transferred to the factory, around the factories, to the labour exchanges (among the unemployed) and in the reformist trade unions. This is the more important in view of the fact that with the widespread prohibition of the Communist Press and of Communist meetings, the work of the party inside the factories becomes more important now than before, for the purpose of constituting a link between the Party and the masses. Hence the need for the most serious efforts to improve the work of the Party nuclei—both factory and territorial—the need for ensuring them *correct and constant leadership*. The work of the nuclei must be reconstructed so that the active members of the rank and file—in particular those in the factory nuclei, the labour exchanges and inside the reformist trade unions—will be provided with up-to-date information of the main political decisions of the Party.

The Party must in practice develop the campaign to *unmask* the Social Democratic and trade union leaders—with facts in black and white—among the *Social Democratic workers and the members of the reformist trade unions*. All slogans, and the whole tone of Communist agitation, must now be exceedingly simple, popular and immediate; they must capture the enthusiasm

of the largest numbers, and of the most backward of the masses.

The Party must launch a strong campaign among the working masses *against the closing down of the Party press*—by means of agitation both in speeches and in the press and by organising mass meetings of protest.

The Party must make use of *every* sign of dissatisfaction in the factories in order to mobilise the masses and raise the struggle to a *higher stage*.

Unless these measures are taken, the occurrences of July 1st and 15th will be repeated, when the strikes and demonstrations arranged for did not take place, or were carried out on a very small scale.

Stronger efforts must be made to *verify the carrying out* of all decisions of the leading party organs, for in existing conditions this is one of the most important factors necessary if the turn is to be made in the situation of the C.P.G. in the factories, and if we are to fulfil the task of destroying the mass basis of Social Democracy.

Great historical responsibility rests upon the Communist Party of Germany. It is one of the first to stand on the threshold of Proletarian Revolution in the second round of war and revolution. But this, in its turn, lays heavy responsibility upon all the Communist sections of capitalist Europe, in the first place; upon the Communist Parties of France, England and Czecho-Slovakia who have not yet fulfilled their *international duty in the form of support to the Proletarian Revolution in Germany*. The Second International at the Vienna Congress reckoned chiefly upon Germany for a *capitalist way out of the crisis*. The unmasking of this counter-revolutionary rôle of the Second International in *its own* countries, the unmasking of the counter-revolutionary rôle of the national bourgeoisie, and primarily the unmasking by the French Communist Party of the rôle of French imperialism in the strangling of the Proletarian Revolution in Germany, will hasten the crisis of German Social Democracy and bring nearer the culmination of the decisive battles of the German proletariat for a *revolutionary outcome of the crisis*.

THE POLYTECHNICAL SCHOOL

By N. KRUPSKAYA.

IN Tsarist Russia (within the borders of the present R.S.F.S.R.) elementary education in 1914 embraced only 4,402,752 children, whereas in 1931 the number had increased to 9,980,605, i.e., by 5,577,853. We have now come very close to universal education. The October Revolution aroused in the masses a tremendous thirst for knowledge. The schools were organised on new principles. They became Soviet co-educational schools; schools at which rote-learning and drill methods have been eliminated and where the children are taught to understand life and to organise it. However, during the world war and the civil war and the destruction that accompanied them, the schools passed through an extremely difficult period. They were occupied for military purposes, as hospitals, were burnt down by the Whites and others were occupied by various economic organisations that had nowhere else to go. In the school year 1923-24, we began to see signs of progress: the schools began steadily to advance. But unprecedented progress in the education of children from 8 to 12 years of age made itself evident at the beginning of last year, and to-day we are already on the eve of universal compulsory education on the four-year school system.

In the five years from 1933 to 1937 universal compulsory education must be extended to all children from the ages of 7 to 15 (the elementary school will become an eight-years school).

To European countries universal education within the limits of a four-year school may seem a very modest achievement. But for our country with its vast agricultural population, its enormous distances and its numerous nationalities that were degraded and oppressed by the Tsarist Government, the first steps were particularly difficult. The *tempo* displayed during the last year shows that matters will now proceed much more rapidly. The broad masses of the population are now participating in the construction of our schools and their activities are being organised. The masses are growing; they are craving for knowledge. Illiteracy is being rapidly liquidated. The Cultural Campaign did what it would have been impossible to do by ordinary methods.

But it is a question not merely of abolishing illiteracy. Knowledge is needed by the masses for the remoulding of the habits of life, for training them in habits of work. And so we find working men and women, collective farm workers of both sexes zealously and stubbornly educating themselves in every kind of school and taking

every kind of educational course. The masses have devoted themselves to the conquest of knowledge, and in view of the rapid growth of the industrialisation of the country and the collectivisation of agriculture, there is not the slightest doubt that we shall achieve universal education on the eight-year school system within the period indicated.

But the chief thing for which we are now striving is the quality of our schools. The Soviet school is a co-educational school and is Soviet through and through; no religious schools exist. The Soviet school is associated with its surrounding environment in the most intimate manner. This association between the school and the surrounding environment in our country, where Socialism is being built up, is of great significance. The systematic study of conditions of environment occupies an important place in the curricula of all our schools beginning from the lowest class. And this study is not merely a book study. The whole point of the matter is that the school is carrying out socially useful work and the children, within the limits of their capacity, collectively participate in Socialist construction. The school, therefore, not only provides the knowledge required for the construction of Socialism, but also inculcates the capacity to apply this knowledge to the facts of life and trains the children in profound habits of organisation.

The children take part in the spring sowing, agitating and other useful work. They also take part in the elections to the Soviets, carrying notices around and reading newspapers aloud to the illiterate. The children are taking a tremendous share in helping to liquidate illiteracy; those who are able to teach their mothers and their sisters do so. The children canvass for subscriptions to the various loans launched. They collect utilisable waste; they take their place in the front ranks of the fight for the collectivisation of the farms and the fight against those who absent themselves from work. In this work the children develop, learning to speak, make speeches and become fighters.

Our children are bold; they say what they think; they will say it to a Red director, to their teachers and to a conference of scientists. At a meeting of working men and working women of the Kalinin Textile Mills in Moscow a young fellow of 12 came forward and said: "We have our children's collective farm and our fruit orchard, which were given to us so that we should take care of them. But a gang of hooligans

broke through the fence, crept into our collective farm and organised drunken parties. To us school children, pioneers, that means nothing; we are intelligent and it does not influence us. But in our orchard young children of pre-school age play and they have begun to play at being drunkards. That will not do, comrades. You have got to help us to repair the damage to the fence as quickly as possible."

At the Krasny Bogatyr Works a young fellow, eleven years of age, came forward and said: "At ceremonial meetings the director of our factory and the whole board make promises to help the school. But what are the facts? We are building a rabbit house and we need nails. But what do they say when we ask for them: 'We shall not give you a single rusty nail! What do you think of that?'"

The children attend a conference of scientific workers and make passionate speeches to the effect that the scientists must help them in their studies, and that they, on their part, would help the scientists in their work. For you see, the scientists must seek the support of the masses. The conference was deeply moved.

There are still very many shortcomings in our schools, but they are already developing active fighters for Socialism.

During the past year we have achieved very good progress.

Having made a careful study of what Marx, Engels and Lenin said regarding the necessity for polytechnical education, having studied what is being done in the industrially advanced countries (U.S.A., Germany, etc.) in respect of training children in working habits, we, at the very commencement of the work of building the Soviet school, realised the necessity of introducing polytechnical education. But it was impossible in the early years to create polytechnical schools on a large scale. Owing to the general economic destruction we were able to organise only a few experimental schools, which were, it is true, interesting enough, but which were placed in exceptionally favourable circumstances. Aye, and even these schools very often began to slip into the path of mutual help. However, the great thing is that into the curriculum were introduced labour methods, the history and the organisation of labour as the organising kernel of education. But that, of course, was not sufficient. Now, however, when mills and factories are springing up everywhere, when the tractor is ploughing our fields, when a wide network of tractor and machinery stations has been created, when labour at the collective farms is being organised on new lines, when the regions of universal collectivisations are increasing, when the

enthusiasm for construction on the part of the masses is growing, when we have Socialist competition and when shock methods of work are becoming prevalent everywhere—we have the conditions which make possible the creation of polytechnical schools on a mass scale in the spirit of Marx and Lenin.

A year ago the First All-Russian Congress on Polytechnical Education was convened.

That Congress was a turning point: the schools entered on the path of polytechnical education. A number of very important questions were discussed at this Congress.

Following the Congress, the Council of People's Commissars passed a decree providing that each of the factory seven-year schools should be attached to a particular factory. The factories are obliged to help the schools in the teaching of polytechnical methods; they must assist in equipping the school workshops and must admit children of the sixth and seventh classes to work in the factory to gain practical experience. The same has been done in respect of the village seven-year schools: they are being attached to machinery and tractor stations and to Soviet and collective farms. This measure has been of tremendous importance as it has enabled the school to become closely associated with the factory. The manager of the school is appointed from among the workers. The children have been given access to the factory. But they are not merely children; they are our students, carried away by enthusiasm for construction, taking the work of the laboratory closely to heart, whether it works badly or well and whether its programme is being fulfilled. The children help to the best of their ability in organising the work. The modern Soviet factory, with its systematic organisation, exerts its influence on the children. For instance, as an heritage from the pre-war days, machines were not provided with the necessary safety screens, but as soon as the children appeared the machines were screened. The interest displayed by the children and their criticisms are taken to heart by the workers.

Working men and women have been brought closer to the school: they interest themselves in its work, help in introducing polytechnical methods and in equipping the school workshops. This winter a series of conferences of workers were held devoted to questions of polytechnical education. A number of very interesting suggestions were made.

Children's conferences on polytechnical questions were held in all districts, and the children showed great enthusiasm for polytechnical methods. Only the sixth and seventh classes are allowed to work in the factories, but all the

children are enthusiastic. They have all been seized by the desire to master technique.

The teachers have also been affected by this enthusiasm. We have known instances when on their rest days they go to work at the factory; they attend the production conferences, and the workers' meetings, and in consequence, feel themselves drawn closer to the workers through which they have obtained a better understanding of the children of the workers. Teachers' conferences on polytechnical questions were also held.

There have been some very interesting investigations of factory seven-year schools attached to textile mills, iron and steel works and of collective farm schools attached to machinery and tractor stations. The investigations were carried out by workers from the factories, the school managers, promoted workers, the teachers and the scholars. These investigations were organised by the Society of Marxian Pedagogues.

Of course, all this is only a beginning. We still have to give much thought to the question how to improve the organisation of the work of the children in the factories; the school workshops must be equipped along new polytechnical lines; the labour programmes must be tested in practice; theory and practice must be associated

in the most intimate fashion; we must revise the method of teaching in a number of subjects; the work of the schools must be planned better; we must carefully guard against the schools slipping into the path of vocational education; we must teach labour organisation; re-arrange the material in a number of subjects taught, etc., etc. All these questions are being studied by the scientific institutes of experimental pedagogues headed by the Institute of Child Polytechnical Labour (Moscow, Lubiansky Proezd, No. 4). This Institute was organised only this year but is already undertaking very interesting work. It would be very good if foreign comrades interested in polytechnical education would write to the Institute giving their views on the subject. Their suggestions would be of value to us.

The Soviet polytechnical school will follow the path pointed out by Marx and Lenin and will undoubtedly play no small part in the cause of Socialist construction in the U.S.S.R.

We have to announce that the second part of "The Red Army of the Chinese Revolution" is unavoidably held up and will appear in our next issue.

Karl Liebknecht

Written in Commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of his Birthday,
August 13th.

Revolutionary history and the international proletariat will always cherish the memory of Karl Liebknecht as that of a fearless fighter against militarism and imperialist war and for revolutionary training of the proletarian youth. His name has become a symbol of proletarian class struggle to Communist youth in particular. Wherever revolutionary youth sounds the call to battle against the bourgeoisie and their Fascist and Social-Democratic auxiliaries, they will do so in the name of Karl Liebknecht.

His courageous struggle directed, regardless of consequences, at the very outbreak of the world war against the infamous betrayal of international solidarity on the part of the leaders of Social Democracy served notice upon the international proletariat that the German proletariat had not yet buried the principles laid down by international Socialism to guide it in its fight against imperialist war.

His battle-cry, "Convert this imperialist war into a civil war," which resounded throughout the world and in which he was joined by Rosa Luxemburg, Franz Mehring and Clara Zetkin in the name of the Spartacus League,—the same challenge that he hurled at the bourgeoisie during the 1916 May Day demonstration at the Potsdamer Platz, has become the rallying slogan of the international proletariat of all countries.

The international importance which attaches to Karl Liebknecht's activities by no means outweighs the great importance of his labours on behalf of the German working class, especially the German proletarian youth.

He was an impassionate agitator, the weight of whose oratory carried everyone before it, both young and old, when he faced the task of whipping up sentiment in favour of the struggle against militarism, against Prussian reaction and junkerism, against the rule of the policeman's club and against that sinister reaction which was lording it in the schools and secondary schools to insure the spiritual enslavement of the proletarian youth.

It was he who made the first endeavours to create proletarian youth organisations and fought strenuously to prevent their degeneration through the influence of reformism. At the congresses of the Social Democratic Party he spoke incisively in favour of getting the party linked up against militarism and for the revolutionary education of youth.

No wonder the reformist leaders, especially those of the trade unions, hated Karl Liebknecht personally and sought to minimise the value of his activities. For Karl Liebknecht had an enthusiastic following among the proletarian masses and the labouring youth and the reformists instinctively felt that Karl Liebknecht's activity represented the strongest opposition which they had to encounter in carrying out their reformist policy, so treasonable to their class. This hatred of the reformists found its most abominable expression in the bull-baiting tactics to which they resorted against Karl Liebknecht and amidst the vociferous approval of the bourgeoisie when, at the outbreak of the world war, he took a definite stand in and outside of the Reichstag against granting the war credits and drew up his eloquent indictment of the war policy of the Social Democracy.

Even then the Social Democratic leaders were morally responsible for the fact that German militarism was able to keep Karl Liebknecht behind the bars of a penitentiary for several years. But no prison walls could stifle the voice of Karl Liebknecht. Just as he together with Rosa Luxemburg had initiated the Spartacus movement against the war policy of the S.P.D., so he helped to spread the movement from within the prison, as did also Rosa Luxemburg. Both deserve credit for having roused the masses of the proletariat out of their ideological confusion in which they found themselves due to the policy of the Second International, and for having implanted the thought of a new international which was formed in March, 1919, under the leadership of the Russian Bolsheviks headed by Comrade Lenin. The

victory of the Russian October revolution made it possible to convert this idea into action. The irony of fate, however, would not permit Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg to participate in the founding of the Communist International.

The venom displayed during the war by the Social Democratic politicians, these exponents of "peace at home" in everything touching the activities of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg took on the form of open incitement to murder these two Spartacus leaders in the days of the November revolution. Ebert, Wels, Scheidemann, Breitscheid and their consorts held them responsible for the chaos into which Germany had been plunged by the world war. They instructed Noske, who himself chose to be known as the "bloodhound," to fetch the bands of White guards to Berlin to crush the Spartacus movement.

Blood-money was offered to the soldiers for the surreptitious murder of these two beloved leaders. The "Vorwärts" inveighed against them most unscrupulously and in a poem even expressed its regret that the two were not included among the assassinated workers which was the handiwork of the White guards who had been brought in. Two days later the foul deed was done. The baiting of the Social Democrats had attained its end. On January 15, 1919, both Karl and Rosa fell victims at the hands of the assassins.

The murder was organised by Captain Pabst, whom Noske was proud to count among his friends. No amount of hypocrisy on the part of the leaders of the Social Democracy will ever be able to cast the slightest doubt upon their intellectual responsibility for these assassinations. Some day a victorious proletariat will sit in judgment over them. Let these scoundrels tremble in anticipation of their sentence.

The memory of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, deeply engraved in the hearts of the international proletariat and especially of the German proletariat, each day summons it anew to struggle for the formation of a united proletarian front in order to make possible the victory of the proletariat, the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the realisation of Socialism. Marching under the banner of the Communist International and the Communist Youth International the proletariat, with the youth in its vanguard inspired by the illustrious example of the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union, draws up the battle line for the proletarian world revolution. Thus they will crown the work to which Karl Liebknecht had devoted his entire life.

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